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OF PHILADELPHIA,

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At a Yearly Meeting of Friends held in Philadelphia the
18th day of the Fourth Month, 1883.

"The Meeting for Sufferings having prepared an Address,
reviving some of the doctrines held by our Society from the
beginning, and bearing a renewed testimony against some
errors to which our members are exposed, it was united with
by this meeting."

Extracted from the Minutes,

JOSEPH WALTON, *Clerk.*

AN ADDRESS.

A FEELING of affectionate interest and deep concern has been awakened at this time towards our members; with desires that they may continue to believe in and uphold to the world those precious principles which were faithfully preached by George Fox and his fellow-laborers, which they unhesitatingly declared to be Primitive Christianity revived, and for whose truth they appealed to the Holy Scriptures, and to the testimony of the Light of Christ inwardly revealed.

Having submitted to the heart-changing power of that grace which bringeth salvation, and passed through those exercises which attend the refining operations of the Lord's Spirit; and thus having been taught in the school of living experience, they became qualified to point out to others the way of salvation.

They clearly saw, and freely and fully acknowledged, that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and that man in his fallen condition has no power to raise himself out of a state of sin, but that he needs a *savior*, not only to procure forgiveness for offences that have been committed, but to cleanse him from impurity, and enable him to live a holy life acceptable to his Creator. This savior is Christ, the Lord, who is one with the Father, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily; who came into the world through the abounding mercy of God,

that through Him we might obtain salvation ; who healed the sick, caused the blind to see and the lame to walk, raised the dead to life, commanded the winds and the waves and they obeyed Him, and forgave men their sins ; who suffered for our sakes the cruel death of the cross ; who was raised from the dead ; and, as the Apostles testified, was exalted with God's right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins ; and who now visits the hearts of all by his Spirit, seeking to turn them from their sins and unrighteousness, and to lead them in the way of holiness, so that He may save them with an everlasting salvation.

George Fox says: "It was opened unto me by the eternal light and power, and therein I clearly saw, that all was done and to be done in and by Christ."—*Journal, Ed. of 1839, p. 62.*

Robert Barclay asserts: "As we firmly believe it was necessary that Christ should come, that by his death and sufferings He might offer up Himself a sacrifice to God for our sins, who, his ownself *bare our sins in his own body on the tree*: so we believe that the remission of sins which any partake of, is only in and by virtue of that most satisfactory sacrifice, and no otherwise."—*Apology, Prop. 5 and 6, sect. 15.*

William Penn says: "I must again declare that *we are led by the Light and Spirit of Christ*, with holy reverence to confess unto the blood of Christ shed at Jerusalem, as that by which a propitiation was held forth to the remission of sins that were past, through the forbearance of God, unto all that believe: And we do embrace it as such; and do firmly believe, that thereby God declared his great love unto the world, for by it is the consciousness of sin declared to be taken away, or remission sealed, to all that have known true repentance and faith in his appearance. But because of the condition, I mean faith and repentance, therefore do we exhort all to turn their

minds to the Light and Spirit of Christ within, that by seeing their conditions, and being by the same brought both into true contrition and holy confidence in God's mercy, they may come to receive the benefit thereof; for without that necessary condition it will be impossible to obtain remission of sins."—*Works, Edition of 1726, vol. 2, p. 411.*

The salvation which comes by Christ includes deliverance from the dominion of sin, and being brought into a state of purity and holiness. Our Early Friends steadily maintained that there is no such thing as being saved from the condemnation due to sin, without being redeemed from the thing itself; as the Scriptures testify, "The wages of sin is death;" and "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption."

In *No Cross No Crown*, William Penn thus pleads with the formal professors of Christianity: "Be not deceived; such as thou sowest, shalt thou reap. [Christ] is none of thy Saviour, whilst thou rejectest his grace in thy heart, by which He should save thee. Come, what has He saved thee from? Has He saved thee from thy sinful lusts? Thy worldly affections and vain conversations? If not, then He is none of thy Saviour. For though He be offered a Saviour to all, yet He is actually a Saviour to those only that are saved by Him; and none are saved by Him, that live in those evils by which they are lost to God, and which He came to save them from."—*Works, vol. 1, p. 278.*

Edward Burrough in his tract on *The Everlasting Gospel of Repentance and Remission of Sins*, makes a similar statement: "None can be saved from the wrath of the Lord but they who are saved from their sins; for sin brings the wrath of God upon the consciences of men, and anguish upon soul and body; and [those] who are not saved from sin, cannot be saved from wrath; for wrath pursues the guilty."—*Works (1672), p. 732.*

George Fox uses this language: "So far as a man is sanctified so far is he justified, and no farther; for the same that sanctifies a man justifies him; for the same that is his sanctification is his justification, and his wisdom and his redemption. He that knows one of them, knows all; but he that doth not feel one of them, feels none of them at all."—*Works, Edit. of 1831, vol. 3, p. 450.*

It was a full conviction of this connection between sin and its wages, that led our Early Friends so earnestly and continuously to exhort all to heed the manifestations of the Light or Spirit of Christ, which God has bestowed upon all mankind; which shows to man the evil of his ways; and, as he submits to its operation, leads him to repentance and the forsaking of all sin, and destroys its dominion through its heart-changing power.

They urged upon all, to bring all their actions, words, and thoughts to this Light for judgment; to turn from everything which it showed to be evil; and to bear with patience the feeling of condemnation for sin, until it might please the Lord to grant a sense of forgiveness. This practical salvation from sin they believed it was essential for all to experience, and that without this obedience to the manifestations of Christ's Light, none could know the saving efficacy of his atonement. They taught, with the Apostle John, that it was those who walked in the Light—lived in obedience to its directions—who would know the blood of Christ to cleanse them from all sin.

By the term *Light*, our Early Friends always meant the spiritual manifestation of Christ in the soul of man; for He, as William Penn says, is the "Glorious Sun of righteousness, and heavenly luminary of the intellectual or invisible world." And in another place he says: "Many are the denominations that are given in Scripture to one

and the same thing. Christ is called the Word, the Light, the Way, the Truth, the Life," etc.—*Works*, vol. 1, p. 530.

George Fox declares: "No man receiveth the power to become [one of] the sons of God, but [he] who receiveth the Light which cometh from Christ."

Edward Burrough says: "Whosoever will be saved with the salvation of God must own the Light of Christ Jesus [as it shines] in his own conscience, and he must believe in this Light and walk in it, even the Light in his conscience that convinces him, and checks him for his evil deeds, and that lets him see what sin he is guilty of. You must believe in this Light and follow it, and depart from that and forsake that iniquity which it convinces you of, and do that good which it moves your hearts into, or else you can never be saved."—*Works* (1672), p. 732.

William Bayly: "The Light is the way, and there is no other, to eternal life and peace; and all that hate it wherewith they are enlightened, shall be condemned."—*Works*, p. 21.

Thomas Stubbs, in his *Call into the Way to the Kingdom* says: Those who draw you from watching and taking heed to that of Jesus Christ in you, they shut the way of the kingdom of God against you, and draw you from your guide and strength and resting-place: therefore all mind the call of the Lord, which is the Light of Jesus Christ [shining or appearing in you] that convinces; which is the *alone* way to the kingdom, that which convinces you of sin, and bears witness against the evil of your doings."

* * * * *

"So all you dear hearts, who are weary and heavy-laden, seeking rest to your souls, to you in the spirit this is the word of the Lord; now return, return within unto the Lord, where a fountain of living love and life is found."—*Edition of 1656*, p. 6.

William Penn in *No Cross No Crown* says: "The manifestation brings power with it. Never did God convince people, but upon submission He impowered them. He requires nothing without ability to perform it." "They

that want power are such as don't receive Christ in his convictions upon the soul ; and such will always want it : but such as do, they receive power (like those of old) to become the children of God, through the pure obedience of faith."—*Works, vol. 1, p. 291.*

Thomas Story, in a conversation with an acquaintance, told him : "That we had been as other men, subject to common infirmities and ignorant of God, as to any experience of his presence and divine working in us, till it pleased Him, in his own goodness and mercy, to visit us by the Spirit of his Son, Christ ; through which we had known a time of condemnation and humiliation for sins past, and true repentance and forgiveness ; and believing in Him, through the work of his Spirit and power in our minds, He, with the Light and Life of his Son, became the object of our faith ; by which also He sanctified our hearts, and reconciled us unto Himself."—*Folio Edition of Life, p. 138.*

The inshining of the Light of Christ in the heart is accompanied with a feeling of its authority ; communicated to the soul immediately from the Source of all good, for it is only through the Lord's power that we are enabled to distinguish between the natural suggestions of the imagination and those Divine impressions which are given to lead us in the way of salvation. This is the origin of true faith, in the religious sense of the word ; and the objects on which it is exercised are the manifestations of the Spirit—the revealings of the Light.

Our Early Friends declared that it was through faith in the revelations of this Life in their own souls, and through submitting to be guided and governed by it, that they came to have a real knowledge and living belief in the doctrines of the Gospel, and knew Christ to be their Redeemer and Saviour—as He himself said, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." The

faith thus begotten in them, they recognized as a Divine gift ; and they denied that any exercise of the natural powers of belief, independently of this, could be of saving efficacy.

When Peter had testified, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," the Master replied, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona ; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven." In full accordance with this is the language of the Apostle Paul, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." The most hardened sinner or hypocritical professor could acknowledge Jesus with the lip and tongue, but it is only through the power of the Spirit that the heart of man is impressed with that living sense which gives value to such a confession.

Robert Barclay in the Second proposition of his Apology, clearly sets forth the doctrine, that the revelations of God by the Spirit were of old the object of the saints' faith, and remain yet so to be.

In a letter written in 1715, Thomas Story gives this advice to his correspondent : "And now, dear friend, I recommend thee to God ; exhorting thee to believe in his Grace given thee through Christ Jesus, the Lord ; even in the engrafted Word which is able to save thy soul. * * * For through faith in the true Light, and walking therein, is not only the true church fellowship, but also there, and not otherwise, doth the blood of Christ, the Son, cleanse from all unrighteousness."—*Life, Fol. Ed., p. 486.*

William Penn, in his *Call to Christendom*, says : "The cause of the confusion and contention that is about religion in Europe at this day, is, that men have deserted this true Light and Holy Spirit, and so are degenerated from the life and power of pure and unspotted religion, and have attempted to comprehend Christ's doctrines without Christ's

Light, and to know the things of God without the Spirit of God.”—*Works*, vol. 1, p. 189.

William Dewsbury bears this testimony: “This I witness to all the sons of men, that I came not to the knowledge of eternal life by the letter of the Scripture, nor by hearing men speak of the name of God. I came to the true knowledge of the Scriptures and the eternal rest which they testify of in Christ, by the inspiration of the Spirit of Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who alone is found worthy to open the seals of the book.”—*Friends’ Library*, vol. 2, p. 228.

George Fox relates his own experience as follows: “Though I read the Scriptures which spake of Christ and of God, yet I knew Him not but by revelation, as He who hath the key did open, and as the Father of life drew me to his Son by his Spirit.”—*Journal*, p. 61.

The difference between Divine faith and the natural power of belief which belongs to our constitution, is thus set forth by Isaac Penington:

“There is a faith which is of man’s self; and a faith which is the gift of God; or, a power of believing which is found in the nature of fallen man, and a power of believing which is given from above. * * * If [man’s knowledge, religion and worship] proceed from and stand in the faith which is of man, they cannot please God nor conduce to the salvation of the soul.”—*Works*, 4th edition, vol. 1, p. 298.

Our Early Friends knew, from living experience, that it was only through Divine assistance that they could turn from evil and choose the good; and that, though Heavenly help and power accompanied the inshinings of the Light, and were given to those who became obedient to it, yet these were not in their own control. Therefore they fervently exhorted their hearers to prize the visitations of the Lord’s Spirit, whilst they were extended for their

restoration or help; and to walk whilst they had the Light lest darkness should come upon them.

Hence they rejected as a delusion the notion, that it was in the power of any to place themselves, whenever they chose, in a state of salvation and acceptance with God, by a profession of reliance on the outward offering of Christ on Calvary. And they earnestly contended, that it was only as man embraced the visitations of Grace, and patiently endured the Lord's baptisms and judgments, that he was enabled to walk in newness of life and to become a true follower of the Lamb, a subject of his heavenly kingdom, and a partaker of the joys of his salvation.

Robert Barclay in the propositions of his *Apology* which treat "of universal and saving Light," says: "This Light and Seed of God in man, he cannot move and stir up when he pleaseth; but it moves, blows and strives with man, as the Lord seeth meet. For though there be a possibility of salvation to every man during the day of his visitation, yet cannot a man at anytime when he pleaseth, or hath some sense of his misery, stir up that Light and Grace, so as to procure to himself tenderness of heart; but he must wait for it: which comes upon all at certain times and seasons, wherein it works powerfully upon the soul, mightily tenders it and breaks it; at which time, if man resist it not, but close with it, he comes to know salvation by it."—*Apology, Prop. V. and VI., sect. 16.*

William Bayly: "You cannot repent when you will, or in your own appointed time, but when the inward life of God stirred, with discoveries and reproofs of the evil ways, words and actions, which by you are brought forth: that is the time, when He calleth, to turn at his reproofs."—*Works, p. 139.*

Whilst they thus clearly set forth man's dependence on Divine help for ability to repent of sin, and to walk in the way of salvation; and that without this help, he who hath

some sense of his misery cannot procure to himself tenderness of heart ; they did not fail to encourage all such to wait on the Lord for this help, not in a careless, indifferent manner, but in an earnest, wrestling spirit, similar to that of the poor publican, whose prayer for mercy was heard. For such is the long-suffering goodness of our Heavenly Father, that He regards with approbation every sincere effort thus to draw nigh unto Him, and will not fail to bestow such a blessing as He sees meet.

They repudiated the doctrine that the Almighty would so impute to man the merits of Christ, as to regard any as just until they had really been made so, by submission to the work of his Spirit in them.

William Penn in his *Truth Exalted* says: "You tell people Christ Jesus has suffered and satisfied for sins past, present and to come ; and that though they are never so corrupt, vile and polluted in themselves, yet are they reconciled to and justified in the sight of God, by his personal righteousness imputed unto them, and not from a work of grace or regeneration in the creature. Therefore no wonder at your vehement cries against a state of perfect separation from sin, as being a dangerous doctrine, who preach acceptance with the holy God, whilst in an unholy state."—*Works, vol. 1, p. 244.*

In common with other professors of the Christian name, our Early Friends believed in the divinity and all the glorious offices of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the Holy Scriptures—that He was the Word which was in the beginning, which took flesh and so appeared among men—that He is the propitiation for our sins—and that by his stripes we are healed—yet they never regarded his work for man's salvation as having been so finished while on earth, as to

render unnecessary his ever-continuing work in the hearts of men. For, in full accordance with the testimony of the Apostle Paul, they have always held the Scripture doctrine, that while we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son, we are to be saved by his life—the life of Christ inwardly revealed.

Isaac Pennington says : “ It is objected against us who are called Quakers, that we deny Christ (and look not to be saved by Him) as He was manifested without us, but look only to be saved by a Christ in us. To which, this is in my heart to answer such as singly desire satisfaction therein.

We do indeed expect to be saved (yea, and not only so, but do already, in our several measures, witness salvation) by the revelation and operation of the life of Christ within us ; yet not without relation to what He did without us. For all that He did in that body of flesh was of the Father, and had its place and service in the will and according to the counsel of the Father. But the knowledge and belief of that since the days of the Apostles, have been very much held in the unrighteousness, and in the separation from the inward work of the power and life of Christ in the heart ; which, as so held, cannot save any. But whoever feels the light and life of Christ revealed in him, and comes into union with God there-through, he feels the work of regeneration, of sanctification, of justification, of life and redemption ; and so comes to reap benefit inwardly, and to partake of the blessed fruits of all that Christ did outwardly.”—*Works, 4th Edition, vol. 2, p. 498-9.*

From this fundamental principle of dependence on the Spirit of Christ for that light and strength which were necessary to enable them to work out their salvation, sprang the method of worship and other peculiarities which marked our Early Friends. When assembled for Divine worship, they sat in solemn silence, waiting on the Lord, with their

minds withdrawn from all outward objects, and from their own thoughts and imaginations; but maintaining an exercise of soul for the arising of Divine life in the hearts of those assembled. And it was only as this life was felt to arise in any and give ability, that they ventured to speak to the people, or offer vocal prayers or praises to the Lord.

William Penn states that their preachers "could not run when they list, or pray or preach when they pleased, but as Christ their Redeemer prepared and moved them by his own blessed Spirit, for which they waited in their services and meetings, and spoke as that gave them utterance." — *Works*, Vol. 1, p. 866.

As the call and qualification for the ministry came immediately from the Head of the Church, and was freely dispensed by Him to those whom He had prepared for this service by his spiritual work in their hearts, and who needed not outward training or the culture of schools to make them able ministers of the Gospel; so they were commanded freely to communicate to others that which they had freely received.

The great end of their ministry was to reach the witness for God in the hearts of their hearers, and to direct their attention to the Light of Christ as their guide, which would lead them safely in the way of salvation. They set little value on the "enticing words of man's wisdom," but were earnestly concerned that their speech and their preaching might be "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

Robert Barclay says, that when assembled for Divine worship, "The great work of one and all ought to be to wait upon God; and returning out of their own thoughts and imaginations, to feel the Lord's presence, and know a gathering into his name indeed, where He is in the midst according to his promise." — *Apology*, Prop. XI, sect. 6.

"From this principle of man's being silent, and not acting in the things of God himself, until thus actuated by God's light and grace in the heart, did naturally spring that manner of sitting silent together, and waiting together upon the Lord."—*Id. sect. 7.*

"As our worship consisteth not in words, so neither in silence as silence; but in an holy dependence of the mind upon God: from which dependence silence necessarily follows in the first place, until words can be brought forth which are from God's spirit. And God is not wanting to move in his children to bring forth words of exhortation or prayer, when it is needful."—*Id. sect. 9.*

"He that ministereth, being actuated thereunto by the arising of the grace in Himself, ought to speak forth what the Spirit of God furnisheth him with; not minding the eloquence and wisdom of words, but the demonstration of the Spirit and of power."—*Id. sect. 18.*

In showing the error of those who "have *set times* in their public worship, as before and after preaching; and in their private devotions, as morning and evening, and before and after meat, and other such occasions, at which they precisely set about the performing of their prayers, by speaking words to God, whether they feel any motion or influence of the Spirit or not," Robert Barclay says: "We freely confess that prayer is very profitable, and a necessary duty, commanded and fit to be practised frequently by all Christians; but as we can do nothing without Christ, so neither can we pray without the concurrence and assistance of his Spirit. But that the state of the controversy may be the better understood, let it be considered, first, that prayer is two-fold, inward and outward. *Inward prayer* is that secret turning of the mind towards God, whereby, being secretly touched and awakened by the Light of Christ in the conscience, and so bowed down under the sense of its iniquities, unworthiness and misery, it looks up to God, and joining with the secret shinnings of the seed of God, it breathes towards Him, and is constantly breathing forth some secret desires and aspirations towards Him. It is in this sense that we are so frequently in Scripture commanded to pray continually, which cannot be

understood of outward prayer, because it were impossible that men should be always on their knees expressing words of prayer; and this would hinder them from the exercise of those duties no less positively commanded. Outward prayer is, when as the spirit, being thus in the exercise of inward retirement, and feeling the breathing of the Spirit of God to arise powerfully in the soul, receives strength and liberty by a superadded motion and influence of the Spirit to bring forth either audible sighs, groans or words, and that either in public assemblies, or in private, or at meat, &c.

"As then inward prayer is necessary at all times, so, as long as the day of every man's visitation lasteth, he never wants some influence, less or more, for the practice of it; because he no sooner retires his mind, and considers himself in God's presence, but he finds himself in the practice of it."

"Because outward depends upon the inward, as that which must follow it, and cannot be acceptably performed but as attended with a superadded influence and motion of the Spirit, therefore cannot we prefix set times to *pray outwardly*, so as to lay a necessity to speak words at such and such times, whether we feel this heavenly influence and assistance or no; for that we judge were a tempting of God, and a coming before Him without due preparation."—*Id. sect. 21.*

William Penn in a *Call to Christendom*, says: "All that pray, preach, sing, worship, &c., and not by the Light and Spirit of Jesus, they go before Christ, before Christ cometh, before He prepareth their hearts, and toucheth their lips with a coal from his heavenly altar; and perform worship in their own will, time and power, and stay not for his leadings. And, therefore, all such rob Christ of his office, who is the Leader of the true Christians."—*Works, vol. 1, p. 188.*

And in his *Visit to Holland*: "This I know certainly from the Lord God that liveth forever, and I have a cloud of witnesses to my brethren, that retirement and silence before God is the alone way to feel the heavenly gift to arise, and come forth pure and unmixed. This only can

aright preach for God, pray to God and beget people to God; and nothing else.”—*Id.* p. 104.

In *An Epistle to all who are sensible of the Day of their Visitation*, the same eminent minister gives this caution: “Remember that nothing bringeth to Christ, that cometh not from Christ. Wherefore all ministry that cometh not from Christ, God’s great prophet and high priest to all true-born Christians, cannot bring people to Christ.”—*Id.* p. 204.

And in *A Tender Visitation to the Dutch*: “True silence before the Lord is better abundantly than forward prayers or self-willed offers.”—*Id.* p. 220.

It was under a deep sense of how much the preservation of the church depended on the ministry being kept in the same life and power in which it was originally exercised, that William Penn thus earnestly counsels those who are engaged in that service:

“I fervently bow my knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you may always be like-minded, that you may ever wait reverently for the coming and opening of the Word of life, and attend upon it in your ministry and service, that you may serve God in his Spirit. And be it little or be it much it is well—for much is not too much, and the least is enough if from the motion of God’s Spirit; and without it, verily, never so little is too much, because to no profit.

“For it is the Spirit of the Lord immediately, or through the ministry of his servants, that teacheth his people to profit: and to be sure so far as we take Him along with us in our services, so far are we profitable and no farther. For if it be the Lord that must work all things in us for our salvation, much more is it the Lord that must work in us for the conversion of others. If, therefore, it was once a cross to us to speak, though the Lord required it at our hands, let it never be so to be silent when He does not.”—*Works*, vol. 1, p. 886.

The doctrines set forth in the preceding extracts from the works of George Fox, Robert Barclay, William Penn and others, were not their sentiments alone, but have ever been the acknowledged and settled belief of the Society of Friends. They are abundantly declared and enforced throughout the voluminous writings of our members, and have been repeatedly sanctioned by the church in its collective capacity.

Being taught by the same Divine Teacher, our Early Friends were led into a remarkable uniformity of doctrinal belief; so that it was observed, that from whatever part of the world Friends came, they spoke the same language—they preached the same doctrine. But in these days it is sorrowfully apparent, that many under our name have departed from some of the doctrines which were most surely believed amongst us in former times, and that many sentiments are now advanced which are inconsistent therewith.

Among these sentiments, against the reception of which we are at this time concerned to caution our members, is the opinion, that when our Holy Redeemer declared on the cross, "It is finished, and bowed his head, and gave up the ghost," that his part in the work of man's salvation was then completed; and that all that now remains to be done is for man to believe in and accept that finished work; and that then he will be in a state of salvation and acceptance with God; leaving out of sight the work of the Spirit of Christ in man's heart, which is also essential to his salvation, and which is thus ignored or undervalued; or considered as following after a belief in Him as He appeared in the flesh; whereas, in accordance with Scripture, Friends have always believed, that saving faith in Christ was the *fruit* of the operation of his own Spirit, and was not to be

attained in our own will and time, or without submission to his Light and Grace ; and that the revelations of this Light were the beginning of all true religion.

The system of doctrine which represents salvation to be the result of belief independently of the work of grace in the heart, often leads its advocates into a presumptuous confidence as to their own spiritual safety. The Light of Christ—the unflattering Witness to the truth—may show to such that they are yet far from being washed and sanctified by the baptizing, cleansing power of the Spirit ; yet, being deluded by the theory they have adopted, they will confidently claim to be in a redeemed state, covering themselves with a covering of the merits and righteousness of Christ. Some even go so far as to assert, that none who have thus once believed in Christ, can so fall away as to be finally lost. Against every degree of this dangerous delusion, Friends have always borne testimony, and have steadily kept in view the declaration of our Saviour, that unless we take up the cross and follow Him, we cannot be his disciples, and that the daily watch unto prayer for preservation must be diligently maintained.

It is truly distressing to hear such persons confidently avowing their certainty of salvation, and their readiness for the stroke of death to fall upon them at any moment ; while there is reason to fear that their religious experience is still superficial, and that they know but little of the washing of regeneration and of that true humility which it ever produces.

Although the faithful follower of Christ is often animated and cheered by feeling the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and by a holy sense of union and acceptance with the Father, yet he knows that he is liable to lose this precious treasure, unless he steadily maintains the

holy watch, and patiently endures those trials and exercises which the Lord dispenses to his servants from time to time for their own preservation, as well as to fit them for the successive services which He designs them to perform. This sense of danger tends to guard him from a presumptuous feeling of security, and to keep him in a humble dependence on the Lord, where alone safety is found.

Those who are carried away with the erroneous opinion, that such an acceptance of Christ's work as man can make when he chooses, will ensure his salvation, will naturally resort to the means at their command to persuade people to take this step; and hence we see that even in meetings which profess to be those of Friends, vehement persuasion, the excitement of music, the sound of numerous simultaneous petitions, the use of the mourners' bench, and other expedients for stirring up the feelings of an audience, are brought into use, to induce a public avowal of faith in Christ; and those who have been persuaded to make the required confession are encouraged to believe that they have found salvation.

We believe it is needful for all to bear in mind the teaching of our Saviour himself: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven." "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

The erroneous opinion, that believers *only* are visited by the inshining of the Light of Christ, and that faith in the outward sacrifice of the Saviour must *precede* the sanctifying work of his Spirit, is not a new one. William Edmund-

son in his journal mentions meeting with one who held this doctrine; to whom he quoted the promise of our Saviour, when He told his disciples of his going away, that He would send the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, that should convince the world of sin, and should guide his disciples into all truth. Thus the same Spirit of truth that leads believers into all truth, convinces the world of sin.

The language of Robert Barclay is very clear on this point: "Without me, says Christ, ye can do nothing. For how becomes an unconverted man a convert, but by having Christ to work with him? And where does Christ co-operate? Does He not there where the work of conversion is wrought, and is not that within? So that Christ must needs be in men [by his Spirit] before they be in union with Him, whereby the faith may be wrought by which they are united to Him."—*Works*, (Ed. 1692,) p. 6.

Another error which has been widely propagated is, that the command of Christ, after his resurrection, to his eleven disciples, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations," is of universal application to *all* those who have made confession of faith in the Saviour; though such a commission may never have been issued to them individually by the Head of the church, nor they fitted and prepared by his power, nor furnished with the spiritual weapons needed for such a service. One of the consequences of this is, that a spurious ministry has sprung up in many places—persons are induced to appear as ministers on whom the gift has not been conferred, and who therefore depend on something else than the anointing, qualifying power of the Spirit of Christ. Thus our ancient testimony to the true

nature and right qualification for Gospel ministry and spiritual worship has been much lost sight of by some under our name.

In some meetings but little time is allowed for waiting upon the Lord in silence, to feel a sense of his presence. A meeting held wholly in silence is thought by some not to fulfil the purpose of assembling for worship; and persons, even those who at former times may have been rightly engaged in the ministry, are sometimes tempted to draw upon their knowledge of the Scriptures, their remembrance of former openings, or the trains of thought which arise in an active mind, in order to satisfy a desire for words; without renewedly feeling the Divine command. Those ministers who yield to such a temptation, will gradually be led to prepare themselves for such efforts by previous study and meditation, and will go to meetings with minds prepared to speak when an opportunity presents—thus entirely forsaking the ground of true Gospel ministry, and substituting for it the will and wisdom of man—forsaking the Fountain of living waters, and hewing out to themselves cisterns that will hold nothing that can refresh the soul that is thirsting for the water of life.

As those who speak in our assemblies lose their dependence on the anointing and help of the Spirit of Christ, they will feel a need for that assistance which human learning, culture and intellectual attainments can give; and hence there is an evident tendency among some to place an undue estimate on the importance of mental cultivation in those called to the ministry of the Gospel; as if the successful exercise of that Divine gift largely depended on human wisdom.

As to the learning necessary for a minister, Robert Barclay says:

"Though we make not human learning necessary, yet we are far from excluding *true learning*; to wit, that learning which proceedeth from the inward teachings and instructions of the Spirit, whereby the soul learneth the secret ways of the Lord, becomes acquainted with many inward travails and exercises of the mind; and learneth by a living experience how to overcome evil, and the temptations of it, by following the Lord and walking in his light, and waiting daily for wisdom and knowledge immediately from the revelation thereof." "This is that good learning which we think necessary to a true minister."—*Apology, prop. 10, sect. 18.*

He further declares: That ministry which comes from "man's arts, parts, and knowledge and wisdom" is but as a "dead carcase, without the power, life and spirit of Christianity, which is the marrow and substance of a Christian ministry. And he that hath this and can speak from it, though he be a poor shepherd, or a fisherman, and ignorant of all that learning, and of all those questions and notions; yet speaking from the Spirit, his ministry will have more influence towards the converting of a sinner unto God, than all of them who are learned after the flesh."—*Id., sect. 22.*

"In our day," he continues, "God hath raised up witnesses for Himself as He did fishermen of old; many, yea most of whom are laboring and mechanic men, who, altogether without that learning, have, by the power and Spirit of God, struck at the very root and ground of Babylon; and in the strength and might of this power have gathered thousands, by reaching their consciences, into the same power and life, who, as to the outward part, have been far more knowing than they, yet not able to resist the virtue that proceeded from them. Of which, I myself am a true witness; and can declare from certain experience, because my heart hath been often greatly broken and tendered by that virtuous life that proceeded from the powerful ministry of those illiterate men."—*Id., sect. 23.*

Where people come to depend on others for their spiritual instruction and refreshment there will be little disposition

felt, patiently and perseveringly to wait on the Lord in the silence of all flesh. To this cause among others may be attributed the spread of the practice by some under our name of reading the scriptures and singing hymns in meetings professedly held for Divine worship.

To one who objected to Friends that "a Bible is not to be seen in all their meetings," Robert Barclay replied :

"We meet not to read the Scripture, but to wait on the Lord, and be taught of Him, and receive from his Spirit what He pleaseth to administer, either in ourselves or through the mouths of his servants ; and we meet to worship God, whose worship is to be performed 'in spirit and in truth,' and not in external reading."—*Works, Ed.* 1692, p. 12.

Though we have ever highly esteemed the sacred writings, yet for two centuries our meetings have been kept free from this use of them, except in a very few instances ; and then mainly to dispel the distrust which at the rise of our Society prevailed among other professors as to our regard for them. We do not doubt that our Holy Head, knowing the tendency of the human heart to rest in outward forms, has watched over us in this respect, to preserve us from what might prove an introduction to relying upon liturgies and pre-arranged forms of worship.

In reference to singing, in an Epistle issued in 1876, our Yearly Meeting gives the following caution :

"As Friends cannot adopt a form of words prepared beforehand and committed to memory, to be recited in meeting as an act of worship, so we believe such productions cannot be rendered less objectionable by singing them ; while by acting on the natural senses and feelings, vocal or instrumental music may deceive into the supposition that the solemn act of worship has been performed,

when the right preparation of heart therefor has been unfelt. The practice is one which, with the exception of a very few instances occurring among the early converts in its infancy, Friends as a Society have discarded ever since their rise."—*Ep.* 1876, *p.* 5.

The importance of this reference to the experience of the past is apparent, when we consider that during that period we have numbered among our members many thousands of faithful, devoted servants of the Lord, who would have turned from no form of service which they believed He called for, and who have had the confidence of their brethren so fully as to assure their sympathy in such service. And yet the history of our Society for two hundred years records only a few scattered instances of singing in our meetings, and these are noted as unusual occurrences.

Congregational singing involves the joining by those assembled in outward professions of spiritual conditions, or in prayers or praises which some of the company cannot in sincerity express. This is altogether inconsistent with that worship which is in spirit and in truth. Yet in many religious societies it is the next step which has been taken. Then in order to avoid the displeasing effect of jarring notes or inharmonious voices, has resulted the committing of the services to a choir selected for their musical skill, without the profession of their being in a spiritual condition to truthfully use the words they sing.

The primary ground of true worship being thus lost sight of, instrumental music has naturally followed, in part through the desire to make the place of worship attractive to the indifferent.

The influence of sweet sounds on the senses is very captivating, and readily acts on the feelings so as to deceive

into a belief that the solemn act of worship has been performed, when the preparation of the heart, which alone can qualify for it, has been unfelt. The sincerely religious have thus had their devotional feelings so blended with the effects of outward harmony that they have been unable to separate them, and have been satisfied without being truly fed; while others, less spiritually minded, have left the place of worship with the impression, that because their natural emotions have been kindled by the performances of others, they themselves have been engaged in offering acceptable worship.

These successive steps in the use of music and ritual services are the almost inevitable result of acting in spiritual things upon our own natural feelings and judgments, and not keeping under the immediate guidance and control of the Holy Spirit of our God, without whose help no man can say, from a living sense of its truth, that Jesus is the Lord, and much less worship Him aright. We cannot presume that we would not have followed in the same path, if it had not been for the merciful care of our Holy Head, restraining his people from taking the first step, and preserving in our Society a steady testimony to the necessity of a holy dependence on the Lord, and waiting on Him, for the arising of his Life in the heart; which alone can enable any to offer acceptable worship or living praises to the Author of all our blessings.

Therefore we regard the attempts which have been made in many places, to introduce into our meetings for worship the practice of reading the Scriptures and singing hymns, as an evidence of departure from the spiritual worship always highly prized by our Society; and as strongly tending to lead to other changes, and to an entire abandonment of our manner of holding religious meetings.

The ministers among us in early times worked "honestly for bread to themselves and their families," as their circumstances required. When at home they had no occasion to employ their time in preparing themselves for the day of meeting by studying out their sermons, or in any other way than by seeking communion with the Spirit of Christ, which they could enjoy while engaged in the business of life. When they travelled abroad in the exercise of the ministry, it was on each occasion from a fresh sense of the Divine requiring; and when the service on which they had been sent was accomplished, they gladly returned to their families and their outward employments. George Fox, in one of his epistles, gives the following advice:—

"If any amongst you have movings to do any service for the Lord, when they have done it, let them return again with speed to their habitation, and there serve the Lord in their generation; that no slothfulness may be amongst you."

The biographies and records of our Society abundantly evince that this has always been the general practice of our members. In illustration of this, one extract from the Life of John Fothergill may here be quoted. Having some prospect of religious service from home, he thought it best not to be much involved in business, yet, he says:—

"I worked often for others, both for a living and that my mind might not be too much disengaged from some temporal concerns. There appeared to me then, and more so since, a danger of being tempted to be easily drawn abroad, after having been somewhat engaged to travel, even before or without that distinct requiring of truth, both to go and return, in which only the ministers of Christ move in true safety, and to right edification. By

indulging such an inclination, we may be in danger of missing or losing the clear knowledge of the pure requirements of the everlasting High Priest; and so make way for formality, a barren ministry and unprofitable labor."—*Friends' Library*, vol. 13, p. 359.

Friends have always exercised a care that the Gospel labors of their ministers should not be impeded by a want of pecuniary means; and, when they have been satisfied of the validity of their concerns, have freely supplied what was necessary in this respect, to those who were called from their homes by the Head of the church on such service.

But of latter years there has grown up in some places a class of ministers who have practically come to make a business of their profession. They follow no outward occupation or employment for the support of their families, but spend their time in services of a professedly religious character. For a pecuniary consideration such preachers will agree to devote a certain time to labor in a specified place. This custom is encouraged by the course taken by some of the committees appointed by Yearly Meetings to look after the religious work going on in their limits; who become employers of such persons, and send them to labor in such parts as they may designate. It is encouraged also by injudicious and excessive gifts on the part of others, which sometimes lead to dependence on such means for support, and thus discourage honest labor for the supply of the necessary things of life. Ministers who yield to these temptations gradually lose their attachment to our testimony against a hireling ministry.

One of the fruits of this departure from our principles, is the sanction given by many under our name to missionary movements conducted in a manner inconsistent

with the doctrines we hold. Every true Christian can rejoice in the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom in the earth, and should faithfully labor in that field the Lord may appoint; but he must recognize Christ as the Leader of his people, and be content to keep within the limits which He assigns. If Friends remain faithful to the principles of our forefathers, and are animated with the same holy, self-denying zeal that actuated them, we believe they will be more efficient instruments in spreading truth and righteousness among men, in those lines of labor which will be opened before them individually than they can in any other way.

In *all* our meetings for Divine worship it is the duty of those assembled to endeavor to turn their hearts to the Lord, seeking to feel his presence and help; and thus to be exercised in that *inward* prayer, which, as Robert Barclay states, must precede any outward offering. But the appointment of special meetings for prayer, to be held in a way different from our ordinary manner of worship, we believe is not consistent with the belief of our Society, that man cannot offer living prayer to the Lord in his own will and time. Nor can we reconcile with our testimony to the government of Christ in our assemblies, and to our individual subjection to Him, the practice in such meetings of placing the control of the proceedings in the hands of one or more persons, who invite others to bear testimony, or to offer prayer; or direct them to cease from those exercises; and who call upon the congregation to sing, to rise to their feet, to kneel, etc.

That the departures of which we have spoken have, to a greater or less extent, influenced the minds of many, is shown, not only by the open avowal of such doctrines by

some, but by forms of expression growing out of them which are now frequently used—by such explanations of several passages in the Bible as reject the spiritual meanings which our forefathers in the truth were divinely enlightened to apprehend—and by a lessened esteem for the standard writings of our Society. This is accompanied with a disregard of our ancient testimonies to plainness in dress and language, and to the avoiding of improper titles and flattering salutations.

Among these objectionable expressions is the use of the word *person* in speaking of the Holy Spirit. Our Society has always objected to the use of such terms in speaking of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, believing it our duty humbly to receive and rest satisfied with the description given to us in the language of Holy Scripture, without attempting to pry further into this sacred mystery. In the *Ancient Testimony*, issued in 1843, our Yearly Meeting gave the following caution, which we would now revive:—

“To speak of the Supreme Being as constituted of three persons, and to attempt to define in familiar terms the relative place and office of each, we believe does not tend to edification, but is calculated to lessen that reverence and fear which ought always to clothe the mind in speaking of Almighty God; tends to bewilder and confuse the sincere inquirer after truth; and not only leads to unprofitable speculation, but may give ground to the sceptic to cavil at the Christian religion.”—*P.* 13.

Against many of these erroneous opinions and practices this Yearly Meeting has, at various times in the last forty years, borne an open and clear testimony. But as the tide of innovation and change has swelled to a greater height, and our members are constantly exposed to the open or

more indirect advocacy of these views, we have felt concerned at this time again to bring to their notice some of the leading distinguishing doctrines of the Christian faith, as held by our Society ; to reaffirm our own conviction of their truth—that they are both scripturally sound, and in perfect accordance with real and living experience—and to bear our unqualified testimony against all attempts to unsettle our members, and to lead our beloved youth away from those principles which constitute the acknowledged and settled belief of the Society of Friends.

Many concerned Friends in the various Yearly Meetings have long watched with sorrowful apprehension the evidences of a growing disposition to go back into those views and practices out of which our early members were brought by a strong hand and an outstretched arm ; and to depart from that higher standard and more excellent way of spiritual religion which they were undoubtedly called by the blessed Head of the church to uphold before professing Christendom.

It is our fervent desire that all such Friends, whether within the compass of this Yearly Meeting or elsewhere, may be more and more bound to the support of our holy religion, and become increasingly qualified rightly to maintain the faith which has been handed down to us, as we believe, as an invaluable inheritance and holy trust.

If they are properly brought under the influence of that Divine love, which seeks to gather all into the true fold, they will be led to instruct the ignorant, to caution the unwary, and to admonish those who have gone astray. While sensible of their own dependence for preservation on the care of the Good Shepherd, and thus kept from indulging a self-righteous or uncharitable spirit, they will be raised above that short-sighted human kindness, which

would naturally incline them to palliate and excuse the errors which are apparent in the church, and which would lead them to hope that these evils will in time work their own cure. Though the Divine power can overrule all things to the accomplishment of his blessed purposes, yet we are taught that such as any sow, such also shall they reap; and if there is not a revival of primitive faithfulness and plain dealing, the harvest may be, a return to even a darker condition as to spiritual religion than that out of which our Society was called in the beginning; and another retarding in the advance of Christ's kingdom.

It has always pleased Divine wisdom to use instrumental means in the carrying on of his work. And those who are sensible of these defections from the truth, and do not use their influence to correct them, as the Lord may open their way, but shut their eyes to the state of the church, will be likely to lose their own strength, and be a means of weakening others. Those cannot reasonably hope for preservation themselves, who maintain no testimony against the evils around them.

We desire, therefore, that all may watch over themselves and over one another in love. This care is especially important in the cases of those who appear in the ministry. Where the communications of these are not in harmony with the doctrines of Friends, we would encourage rightly concerned Friends, especially those in the station of Elder, to extend affectionate labor to such for their information and instruction; and where this labor is not availing, such persons should be discouraged from continuing to offer their services in this way; so that the flock may be protected from the unsettling and disorganizing influence of views of religious belief which would destroy the unity and harmony of the Society; and, if they prevailed, would

utterly defeat the great purpose for which, as we believe, we were raised up to be a separate people in the earth.

The same watchful care is needed in reference to books and periodicals written by persons professing to be Friends, in which sentiments adverse to those always held by our Society are more or less openly advanced. These sentiments being presented in plausible forms, and coupled with much that is good, are the more readily accepted by the unwary.

Some of the periodicals, which profess to maintain the doctrines of our Society, sympathize with movements carried on within its borders which are utterly inconsistent therewith; and which, being themselves the fruits of unsoundness in principle, are carrying their participants and advocates into increasing departures from the faith and practice of Friends. They publish reports, drawn up in terms of commendation, of "revival" and "devotional" meetings, where the leading actors and much of their doings are out of harmony with true Quakerism. The zeal and activity shown in these things have so captivated the writers, that they seem blinded to their ulterior consequences; and they point to them as evidences of religious life and growth, worthy of imitation. The protest which is raised against some of the wilder extravagances, either in doctrine or practice, of the leaders in these innovations, is counteracted by the advocacy of much that is only a part of the same erroneous system.

In these and other ways, we believe these periodicals exert an influence in undermining the attachment of their readers to the doctrines of our Society, gradually imbuing them with ideas that spring from a root of error, and preparing them for the ultimate acceptance of the errors themselves.

We would encourage those Friends whose eyes have been opened to see these tendencies and dangers, to endeavor in Christian love and faithfulness to convince the writers and publishers of such periodicals, that they are aiding in the dissemination of views and practices which are producing confusion and disorganization throughout the Society of Friends; and also to endeavor to put others on their guard against the influence thus exerted.

While deeply concerned that our members may be preserved out of all that would lead them astray, we are comforted in the belief that there are many in various parts of the Society of Friends, and also among our beloved younger members, to whom the principles of truth are still dear; and who, amid many discouragements, are endeavoring to support that precious cause which the faithful members of our Society in every generation have felt bound to maintain. We tenderly sympathize with such, and desire their encouragement in a faithful upholding of the truth; so that they may be able at the end of life to say with the Apostle, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith—henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

We renewedly feel, that however sound may be your belief in the doctrines of the Christian religion, yet this will profit you little, unless you are willing to submit your hearts to the government of Christ, to bear his cross, and walk in the path of self-denial. This was the high and holy way in which many of your forefathers in the Truth were enabled to walk; who were redeemed from the love of the world, and, being filled with the love of God, were diligent laborers in his vineyard. May none of you become so absorbed in your outward business or

employments, or in looking after your personal comforts and enjoyments, as to yield to the suggestions of a selfish, lukewarm, slothful and ease-loving spirit ! But may there be a revival among you of primitive zeal and devotion to the cause of Christ !

Dear Friends, we exhort you to be frequent in communion with the Lord. Seek for times of retirement and waiting upon Him, when your minds can be withdrawn from all outward objects. And, in your daily employments, endeavor to have your thoughts often turned to the Source of all good, so that you may be preserved in a humble, watchful state, and experience the Lord's power to be about you, for your help and protection.

Frequently read the Holy Scriptures with seriousness and reverence, looking to the Lord for light and understanding, and feeling after that edifying and contriting influence which often attends their perusal.

Make yourselves acquainted with the history of your own Society, and with those writings of its members which have received the sanction of the church. The lively relation of the experiences of those who have been safely gathered into their heavenly inheritance, the clear illustrations of the doctrines of the Gospel which their writings contain, and the fervent exhortations to others, to follow in the footsteps of Christ's companions, have often been instrumental in awakening earnest desires after truth and holiness, and have had a tendering and baptizing influence on the hearts of their readers.

And may the Lord be pleased, if consistent with his holy counsel, to hasten the coming of the day foretold by the prophet, when the language shall be applicable to the church, "Thy watchman shall lift up the voice, with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."





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